

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re Patent application of:)
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Douglas G. Nelson) Examiner: Timothy D. Collins
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Serial No.: To Be Assigned) Group Art Unit: 3643
)
Filed: October 10, 2003)
)
For: *Anti-Hijacking System Operable in*)
Emergencies to Deactivate On-Board)
Flight Controls and to Remotely)
Pilot Aircraft Utilizing Autopilot)

PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT

Honorable Commissioner for Patents
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450

Dear Sir:

In the Specification

On page 8/33, in line 11, cancel "switch."

In the Claims

Cancel Claims 1 - 55 and add new Claims 56 - 60 set forth hereafter:

56. A method of securing an aircraft against unauthorized direction or misdirection, comprising:
detecting a potential imminent unauthorized control input to the aircraft;
in response to the step of detecting, triggering a security mode whereby manual control
of the aircraft navigation is disabled, and automatic control of aircraft navigation is commenced.

57. The method of Claim 56, and further comprising the steps of:

automatically selecting a nearest suitable landing site for the aircraft based on a search of a database of landing sites; and

automatically redirecting the aircraft onto a flight path terminating at the selected nearest suitable landing site.

58. The method according to Claim 56, and further comprising the step of:

receiving a remotely transmitted radio transmission constructed to control the navigation of the aircraft after entry into the security mode.

59. An apparatus for securing an aircraft against unauthorized direction or direction of the aircraft, the apparatus comprising:

a security navigation module further comprising:

an alarm interface to an alarm source for receiving an alarm signal directed to the security navigation module from the alarm source;

a control interface for sending communications to flight control facilities of the aircraft; and

a sensor interface for receiving communications from aircraft sensor facilities, whereby receipt of an alarm signal at the alarm interface is operative to cause the security navigation module to disable manual navigation control of the aircraft and to assert automatic control of the aircraft by sending a communication to the flight control facilities of the aircraft via the control interface, wherein the automatic control of the aircraft is based at least in part on signals received by the security navigation module at the sensor interface.

60. The apparatus of Claim 59, wherein the alarm source is a manual actuator manipulatable by a human operator.